



HEAT WAVE? NO SWEAT

As high temperatures surged into the mid-90s Wednesday, most residents just took the heat in stride. Many people, including these children from Loyola Park day camp, hit the lake-front. A break in the hot streak is expected Saturday. **Chicagoland, Page 4**

Tom Skilling: High 94 Low 76
Weather page, back of A+E section



JOSÉ M. OSORIO/TRIBUNE PHOTO

Chicago Tribune

An epic struggle to save her home

Life setbacks force journey through loan adjustment

BY DAWN TURNER TRICE
Tribune reporter

Constance Shabazz and her family were once living the American Dream. A medical doctor, she had gone back to school in the early 2000s to earn a master's degree from Harvard University to further her career. Her husband was a successful small-businessman. Their two youngest sons attended private schools.

For more than two decades, the family has lived in the Beverly neighborhood in a handsome, ivy-lined Tudor, and Shabazz imagined that the couple would one day pay off their 30-year mortgage and throw a party to tear up the note, the way her parents did in 1969.

"The thinking back then was that you could pay off your mortgage within your lifetime and you were free," said Shabazz, 61, who grew up in the Chatham neighborhood.

But a career change and a car accident dramatically altered the Shabazzes' fortunes and left the family staring down foreclosure.

The story of how Shabazz would save her home is a glimpse into what, for many homeowners, has been a painstaking federal loan modification process involving mountains of paperwork, hours on the phone with mortgage representatives and long meetings with housing counsel-

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Tunney may pull Wrigley support over hotel issues

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GIN JOINT HAS JUICE

Meet the crew behind the bar at Scofflaw, Logan Square's wildly successful neighborhood spot. **Dining**

After decades in Hyde Park, bookshop closes

Business

'It was an ethical and moral character flaw'



NANCY STONE/TRIBUNE PHOTO

Ousted Metra CEO Alex Clifford, right, listens to his attorney, Michael Shakman, at Wednesday's Regional Transportation Authority hearing.

Clifford assails Madigan for patronage pressure

BY STACY ST. CLAIR AND RICHARD WRONSKI
Tribune reporters

Former Metra CEO Alex Clifford offered an insider's look at Illinois' culture of political back-scratching Wednesday as he provided the most detailed accounting yet of patronage allegations that he says led to his departure from the commuter rail agency.

In his first public comments since leaving, Clifford accused three state lawmakers of interfering with personnel decisions and blasted two key Metra board members for allegedly pushing contracts that benefited their own business associates.

Clifford took repeated swipes at Illinois House Speaker Michael Madigan, the all-

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Metra board: Resign
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Chicago Way at RTA
Cuts to investigation budget sought, John Kass writes. **Page 2**



powerful legislator who holds great sway over transit funding and who asked the agency to give one of his political foot soldiers a raise.

The legislative inspector general's office confirmed Wednesday that it was investigating the claims for any legal or ethical violations, though Clifford said he does not believe Madigan broke any laws by making the request. He did, however, offer a rare public — and personal — slap at the speaker.

"I thought it was an ethical and moral character flaw," he said.

Metra board Chairman Brad O'Halloran has forwarded Clifford's allegations to the state's executive inspector general. O'Halloran has denied Clifford's claims, including a suggestion that he tried to secure a banking contract for an institution to which he has significant ties.

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Healing from suicides, together

3 women reach out online to help fellow survivors find peace

BY COLLEEN MASTONY
Tribune reporter

They come together every month now. Three young women, who arrive at the restaurant one by one, and sit at a table in a corner. A waitress pours water and takes their order. And then the women begin to talk about their fathers.

"I miss him so much," says one woman.

Her two friends know exactly what she means.

Lindsay Van Sickle, Becky Olson and Jessica



PHIL VELASQUEZ/TRIBUNE PHOTO

Becky Olson, from left, Jessica Hutchison and Lindsay Van Sickle work on their blog, OurSideofSuicide.com.

Hutchison all lost their fathers to suicide. Two years ago they met in an eight-week support group and, through the fog of

lives. After the deaths of their fathers, each struggled with how to move on.

And so they began to meet, every few weeks. Over burgers or salads, they discussed everything, from work to celebrity gossip. But mostly, they spoke about longings and losses that were large and small, after their fathers committed suicide.

Who will remind me to change the oil in my car?

Who will call me, when I'm traveling, to make sure my plane landed safely?

How is it possible that my father is really gone?

This month, the three

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FEC: Kirk's campaign didn't violate election law

The agency agreed with U.S. Sen. Mark Kirk's position, saying that the more than \$143,000 paid to his then-girlfriend did not have to be disclosed because she was a subcontractor working for a company hired by his campaign. **Chicagoland, Page 4**

\$1.50 city and suburbs,
\$1.99 elsewhere
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